Carrying the Merry Opera War Across to London

Hammerstein Built a Beautiful Theatre in The Kingsway, and "Opened With Debts"

By H. E. KREHBIEL

CHAPTER VII

MR. HAMMERSTEIN did not long lie quiescent on the field of battle after the war with his Metropolitan rivals. Managerially he had been decapitated, but his headless trunk was like the Irishman's snake, dead but not cognizant of the fact, while his trunkless head was like that of the victim of Ko-Ko's fictitious execution:

"Now tho' you'd have said that head was dead,
(For the owner dead was he),
It stood on its neck, with a smile well bred
And bowed three times (to me)"——

Pooh-bah tells us, if that aristocratic individual's circumstantial account of the incident which Mr. Gilbert's operatic people cooked up for the edification of the Mikado is to be believed. The Metropolitan's sabre true, having cut cleanly through the Hammersteinian cervical vertebræ, the Hammersteinian head bowed first most politely to Mr. Gilbert's home city. Its owner had been compelled to relinquish his managerial ambition for a space in four great American cities, but the rest of the world was his oyster could he but open it. Mr. Hammerstein resolved to try, and inserted the point of his sword in the world's periphery at London. He was in Europe when the contract of sale was signed by his son. Before sailing from New York he had spoken of his plans for the next season in New York and Philadelphia. These plans embraced a reform in the sale of tickets something like that which was forced upon the Metropolitan company three years afterward by a disgraceful scandal, and also the employment of a Russian ballet, toward which the thoughts of managers in London and New York had been turned by a Parisian success.

He Told Them About His London Project

Though barred from the field of grand opera, that of comic opera or operetta was free to him, and to this form of entertainment he opened the Manhattan Opera House, on September 20, 1910, with an exceedingly bright little piece called "Hans, the Flute Player," adapted from the French, which had won success at its first production at Monte Carlo, in 1906, and at the Theatre Apollo, in Paris, in the spring of 1910. Called before the curtain after the second act on the first night in New York Mr. Hammerstein told his audience that he intended going to London, not for the purpose of making it his permanent home, but to advance the new enterprise on which he had embarked. I make no doubt but that he had already formed a resolution to set up a rival to the ancient establishment in Covent Garden and that his visit was for the purpose of finding a site for a new opera house. About a year before this time a wide thoroughfare had been opened in London in the heart of a district rich with the clusterings of theatrical traditions. It was called The Kingsway, was about equidistant from Covent Garden and Drury Lane and debouched into the Strand. In this spacious street Mr. Hammerstein caused a beautiful theatre to be built of granite and marble at a cost of about $750,000. Of the money expended on the construction $300,000 came from the sale of the Philadelphia and New York interests, that sum being still in his hands after he had paid off the mortgage held by Mr. Stotesbury, similar encumbrances on the Manhattan Opera House, the Victoria and the Republic theatre, which he owned, in New York and other debts amounting to about $150,000.

With characteristic confidence and energy he began his London experiment, and had seen the foundations of his new building laid when he returned to New York, in January, 1911. Characteristic also was his reply to a reporter's question: "What do you intend to open the house with?"

"With debts," was the reply; "I always open a house with debts."

There was a suggestion that the English people might not take him seriously, and out came another exhibition of his character:

"I will make them. It is not a question of what they will do, but of what I shall do."

Asking No English Help at All

The story of the London attempt can be only a short interlude here. The opera house in The Kingsway was opened on November 13, 1911, with a performance of "Quo Vadis." Mr. Hammerstein was his own manager; he asked no English help, but called to his side two trusted, faithful and capable servants from New York, Lyle D. Andrews and Jacques Coini, who had been respectively treasurer and stage manager at the Manhattan Opera House. At the outset fortune seemed to smile propitiously upon the undertaking. On the opening night the receipts amounted to over $6,600 and in the first week to over $21,000. A winter season of fifteen weeks was given, at which twelve operas were performed, and a summer season of twelve weeks, from April 22 to July 13, 1912. Among the operas performed in this second season was "Les Cloches de Corneville," which the redoubtable manager himself conducted. Then came an incident of a kind familiar enough to operatic history, but concerning which the public is seldom informed. The closing days of Mr. Stanton's consulship at the Metropolitan Opera House saw such an occurrence; the closing days of Mr. Grau's another, in the first of which the reward took the shape of baubles distributed by royalty, and suspicion has touched at least one of the productions under the present administration. Doings of the kind involve no moral turpitude, yet they are always surrounded with mystery. In the present instance a wealthy and titled amateur composer wrote an opera, wanted to have it performed and paid the piper for his dance. Lord Howard de Walden's "The Children of Don" was produced by Mr. Hammerstein a fortnight before the close of the season. It was a pretentious work and made a dismal failure, so great a failure, indeed, that although Lord Howard was the holder of a mortgage for £40,000 on the opera house and had contributed a large sum for the production of the opera, Mr. Hammerstein refused to give it the third performance which the composer asked or demanded. Thereupon there came a rupture of relations, which had fateful consequences.

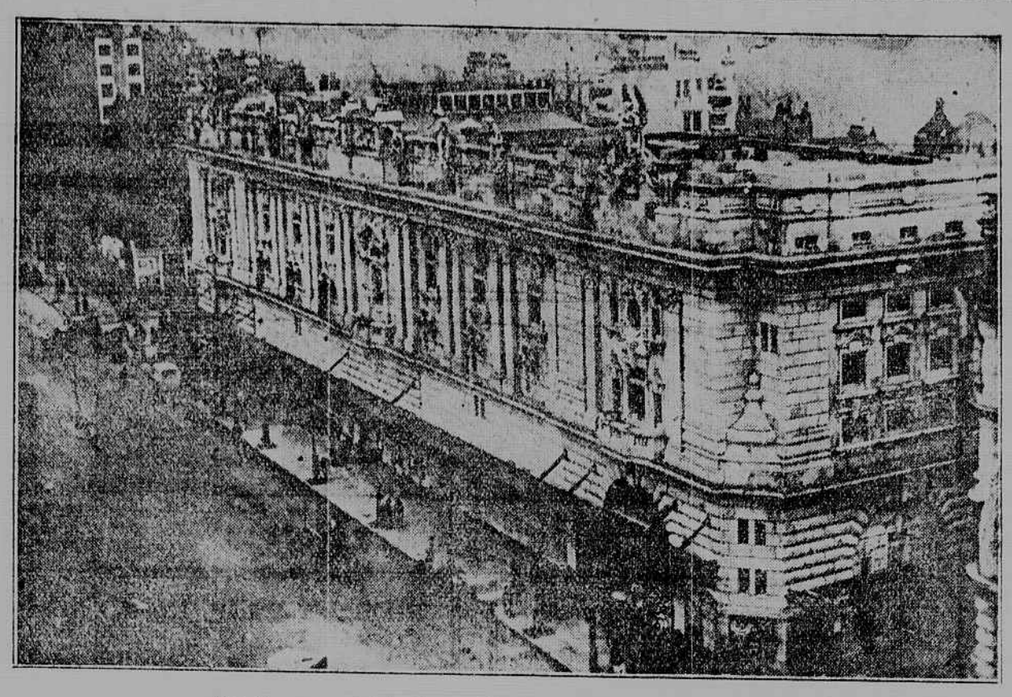
On the last night of his season Mr. Hammerstein, following his American methods, addressed the London public in a speech from the stage, in which he said that he was going to New York to look after his home interests, but would be back for the next season with new singers and new operas. The business which called him back to New York grew out of entanglements at the Victoria Theatre, which had been his most prolific source of supply in his earlier enterprises. Returned to America, he made a contract of rental and sale of the Kingsway house, through Mr. Andrews, to Mr. Stanley Denton, a gentleman who was reputed to have an income of £30,000 a year. The new manager made the theatre the home of a review entitled "Come Over Here," which achieved a popular success. The overhead expenses of the house, however, were so great that he became involved in financial difficulties, and defaulted in his payments to Mr. Hammerstein. Thereupon Lord Howard foreclosed the mortgage and became the owner of the house. Mr. Hammerstein lost the whole amount of his investment.

Returned to New York, Mr. Hammerstein devoted the summer to an adjustment of the affairs of the Victoria Theatre and to a search for new worlds to conquer, with faith in himself undimmed and courage undaunted. Up from the quagmire flew the old *ignis fatuus*—opera at popular prices. In November, 1912, he broached his new scheme to the public. He wanted to build another opera house and in it produce English opera at prices ranging from $3 down to 50 cents, but he confessed that to do this it would be necessary for him to obtain the consent of the Metropolitan Opera Company, the contract with which, he said, prevented him from giving opera on his own account and also stood in the way of his acceptance of two offers of assistance, one from a music publishing house, the other from a Russian impresario connected with the Royal Opera at St. Petersburg.

The statement was characteristic of a time when the air was full of stories about new rivals of the Metropolitan company, and no tale could be told so absurd that it would not find publication and credence. There was no Royal Opera in St. Petersburg with which an impresario could be connected, but only the Imperial Russian Opera administered through a court official by the Czar himself, who was not likely to concern himself with operatic projects in America. As to the other interest, the statement sounded like an echo of some talk in which Mr. Tito Ricordi had indulged two years before at a juncture when the Metropolitan people professed to be big with an ambition to foster opera in the vernacular. At a dinner which grew out of a movement inaugurated by the Metropolitan company's offer of a prize for an opera in English by a native composer Mr. Ricordi, whose publications occupied a large part of the Metropolitan repertory, had considerable to say about the need of a greater number of opera houses in the United States.

The talk was a symptom of the prevalent operatic mania, anything but philanthropic in motive, and before Mr. Ricordi returned to Italy he had given a quietus to the story that the house of Ricordi was about to engage in such an enterprise as the sanguine champions of American opera thought. Italian publishers control opera houses in Italy not for altruistic ends or always for the good of art, but to promote and safeguard their publications. It was because of a fear in some circles that the system might be introduced here that the Metropolitan company fell under suspicion in 1908-'09.

In taking his preliminary steps Mr. Hammerstein was not inconsiderate of his obligations to the Metropolitan company. He addressed a letter to the directors of the company outlining his plan and asking their consent to its execution. He also consulted Paul Cravath, esq., one of the company's directors, who as their legal adviser had drawn up the contract of sale. Mr. Cravath was not inimical to the project, in which, like Mr. Hammerstein, he saw an educational influence which might in time result in making the popular opera a feeder to the more aristocratic establishment. It so chanced, however, that Messrs. Kahn and Vanderbilt were in Europe at the time, and a consideration of the letter had to wait upon their return. After three weeks, on December 18, 1912, the directors gave their answer refusing to allow Mr. Hammerstein to proceed with his project. Their refusal, they said, was based upon their belief that New York could not or would not support two opera houses and that Mr. Hammerstein's project threatened harm to the existing institution.



Mr. Hammerstein's Opera House in The Kingsway, London

A Prospect of Opera in English

They gave the full text of their letter to the newspapers. They quoted Mr. Hammerstein's words (or rather those of his son, Arthur, who had acted as his attorney in fact), in which he spoke of the enormous increase in the cost of opera by reason of the exactions of singers, the ruinous cost of the rivalry between the houses and his conviction that one house could serve the cause of opera better than two and that the Metropolitan, because of its practical subsidy through its stockholders, could better fulfil the public need. The statement held out the prospect of opera in English at the Metropolitan "on a basis which would avoid conflict with the present season of opera in Italian, French and German." Even "with its enormous success" of the preceding year, said the letter, the Metropolitan company had "made practically no profit and better results were not expected for the current year."

On the day on which the letter of the directors appeared Mr. Hammerstein in the breezy way which made the newspapers his willing bellmen, and even champions, announced that he was willing to go ahead with his project regardless of the terms of his agreement. "If the press and the public give me sufficient evidence that they want me to give grand opera in English I will do it," were the words of his defiance.

A new operatic project essentially like that of Mr. Hammerstein now began to take shape in the City Club. Whether or not it was born of the purpose of Mr. Hammerstein and the refusal of the Metropolitan directors I shall not attempt to say. It was suspected by some that the project rooted in the plan which had been outlined in the letter to the Metropolitan directors and the fact that the leading spirits of that directorate at once gave it moral and physical support lent the semblance at least of probability to the theory that the City Club's scheme of giving "municipal" opera in the New Theatre, now called the Century Opera House, had been conceived for the purpose of discouraging Mr. Hammerstein from proceeding with his undertaking. Mr. Hammerstein made the charge openly at the time and met with a denial from the spokesman of the Metropolitan company. In his latterday communications on the subject with me he has not reiterated it, but seems to have assumed that the plan was born in the minds of some of the gentlemen of the club before he addressed the Metropolitan directors.

The history of the undertaking which grew out of the public spirited endeavor of the City Club deserves attention, which it shall receive in these columns later; I am now directly concerned with the other project. Mr. Hammerstein's acts now become more significant than his words. In March, 1913, he bought a plot of land at Lexington Avenue and Fifty-first Street and announced that he would begin within two weeks to build an opera house on it, which would be opened on November 10. The style of performance should be that which he had proposed to the directors of the Metropolitan company. The site was that formerly occupied by the Nursery and Child's Hospital, 75 feet on Lexington Avenue by 220 feet on Fifty-first Street. The building was to cost $1,000,000. Through the newspapers he told the public that he was going to give opera in English, and if the Metropolitan directors didn't like it they might go to the courts for redress. No other man being found willing to throw himself into the breach for English opera, he was going to do it. Why? He answered the question thus: "I am a child of New York. I revel in its greatness. It has about one hundred theatres, has a good society opera house, but has no opera house for the population at large. Our municipality can not and will not aid in the founding and maintaining of such an edifice and to our government such a proposition never appeals. With what I am doing I will earn the approbation of my fellow citizens and the millions of lovers of music and adherents of musical culture. . . . The house will be known as the 'American Opera House.' I think I will open Monday, November 10, at 8 o'clock."

As Ironbound as Verbose Phraseology Can Make It

A merry war was thus proclaimed, and right merrily was it carried on in the newspapers. On March 27 the Metropolitan directors gave out the text of the clause in the contract of sale which prohibited Mr. Hammerstein and his son Arthur from embarking in any grand opera enterprises until 1920. It seemed to be as ironbound as verbose legal phraseology could make it. When this portion of the contract of sale was made public Mr. Hammerstein retorted that the overtures to purchase his opera interests had come from the Metropolitan directors and that he had not listened to them until he had broken down so completely in mental and physical health that his physician had commanded him to cease work. Thereupon he had put the matter in the hands of his son Arthur and sailed for Europe, leaving a power of attorney for his son. He denied that he had ever contemplated abandoning the giving of opera, but in his power of attorney, signed on April 15, 1910, he had expressly empowered his son to enter into an agreement in writing to the effect that he would not for the term of ten years be engaged, directly or indirectly or in any way, with the business of producing opera.

On April 18, 1913, Mr. Hammerstein announced to the world that he had borrowed $235,000 for his operatic enterprise and would begin building as soon as he got a title to the ground. Twelve days later he gave out a statement that if the City Club persisted in its purpose he would abandon his English opera plan and enter into competition with the Metropolitan Opera Company by giving French and Italian opera at Metropolitan prices. Later, I believe, he borrowed $450,000 from the Manhattan Life Insurance Company, which he put into the Lexington Avenue property, in addition to $200,000 which he had obtained from the United Booking Company for the privilege of giving vaudeville at the Palace Theatre, which was within the zone in which he held a monopoly for the Victoria Theatre. From the profits of this playhouse he had accumulated a further sum of $100,000. He had made contracts with singers, confident that his original project would not meet with opposition from the Metropolitan directors. He had taken counsel of distinguished jurists and rejected the common sense advice of those concerned with him in the administration of his theatrical affairs.

With his opera company he purposed to give performances in a large number of cities throughout the country and to sow opera houses broadcast wherever he could obtain a gift of land on which to build and a loan. He probably felt that he was justified in his effort to give opera for a supposedly famishing public no matter what interpretation the purchasers of his interests in New York and Philadelphia put upon the contract he had made with them. He was warned by them on May 15 that they would take legal steps to enjoin him if he persisted in his purpose, but the only effect of the admonition was to call out more of what the newspapers considered his humor. Thereupon, on July 2, 1913, the Metropolitan company filed a summons and complaint in the Supreme Court of the State of New York asking that he and his son be enjoined from putting their purpose to give opera into effect. The answers of Mr. Hammerstein admitted nearly every essential allegation in the complaint, but set up a series of affirmative defences, telling at great length how the plaintiff had forced him into the contract for the purpose of creating a monopoly, taken advantage of his wrecked body and perturbed mind, had tempted a dozen singers away from him, compelled him to pay other artists more than they were worth and brought him to the verge of ruin. He sought refuge in the plea that the Metropolitan Opera Company was engaged in interstate trade and commerce and that its acts toward him were in restraint of trade and fell under the condemnation of the Federal statute called the Sherman act.

A Motion for Judgment on the Pleadings

After the issue had been joined Mr. Hammerstein continued to publish his pronunciamentos in the newspapers. He would begin his season on November 17 and play English opera all the year 'round, and French and Italian part of the time. This was in October, when the newspapers were showing a generous spirit toward the Century Opera, which had crystallized into a fact. If judgment went against him in the equity proceedings he would turn his contracts and properties over to a corporation which was to be organized for the purpose of giving opera in the Lexington Avenue opera house. The Metropolitan Opera Company, having filed a demurrer to the answers of the defendants, finally decided to quit trying the case in the newspapers and filed a motion for judgment on the pleadings, averring that the defendants had admitted every material allegation in the complaint and urging that the defence set up were unsound in law and even if true were immaterial. This motion was argued before Justice Pendleton of the Supreme Court, on October 18, 1913. Before judgment was rendered Mr. Hammerstein announced another change of plans. "The completion of his house had been delayed by the architects, but the theatre would be opened in January, 1914, and a series of operas in English would be given at popular prices. In due course Justice Pendleton pronounced judgment, granting the injunction prayed for by the Metropolitan Opera Company, holding that the giving of opera was not trade or commerce and that the Sherman anti-trust law had nothing to do with the case. This judgment was affirmed on appeal by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court in April, 1914, but long before then work had stopped at the opera house, and Mr. Hammerstein's protestations of an unalterable determination to give operatic representations, whether or no, also came to an end. In view of the fact that the enterprise fostered by the City Club had made a loss of $50,000 in the season, which also came to an end for the time being about the time of the decision, Mr. Hammerstein's judicial friends and counsellors were disposed to congratulate him upon his involuntary inactivity; but he was more an object of pity than felicitation.

Within four months four of his sons died, and his health was so shattered that as I write he is not yet fully recovered, though some of the old spirit seems to be flaming up within him. After some delay he completed the building of the opera house, and it was used for picture shows and vaudeville performances, with a melancholy suggestion of its original purpose in the way of performances of fragments of operas. It was found to be impossible to meet the running expenses of the house from the receipts, however, and, Mr. Hammerstein failing to pay the interest and other charges, the Manhattan Life Insurance foreclosed its mortgage and purchased the property to protect its loan. Only in the season 1917-'18, when it was hired by the Chicago Opera Company for a season of opera, did its walls give back the echoes with which Mr. Hammerstein contemplated that they should always ring.

The Strange Edges of an Old Picture Book

ALREADY the world before the war looks like another world. It isn't so far away yet as to give it perspective, yet sometimes imaginative persons like Mr. Wells can project themselves back in such a way that it all takes on the strange edges of an old picture book. He does that in "The Education of Joan and Peter," a new Wellsian novel, sections of which are being printed in "The New Republic." Seeing Germany in the past when she was gathering forces to throw herself on civilization, by the light of all the events that followed is fascinating. Mr. Wells's young Peter was in Moscow, and in Moscow he was reminded by dissimilarity of Germany. Russia was "uncoördinated."

"But all the other north temperate races, it seemed to Oswald, as distinguished from the Germans, had the same suggestion about them of uncoördinated initiatives. Their minds moved freely in a great old system that had lost its hold upon them. But the German views were coördinated. They were tremendously coördinated. Two Sundays ago he and Peter had been watching the Sunday morning parade along Unter den Linden. They had gone to see the white-trousered guards kicking their legs out in the goose step outside the guardhouse that stands opposite the Kaiser's palace, they had walked along Unter den Linden to the Brandenburg Tor, and then, after inspecting that vainglorious trophy of piled cannon outside the Reichstag, turned down the Sieges Allee, and so came back to the Adlon by way of the Leipziger Platz. Peter had been alive to many things, but Oswald's attention had been concentrated almost exclusively on the youngsters they were passing, for the most part plump, pink-faced students in corps caps, very erect in their bearing and very tight in their clothes. They were an absolutely distinct variety of young human male. A puerile militarism possessed them all. They exchanged salutations with the utmost punctilio. While England had been taking her children from the hands of God, and not so much making them as letting them develop by default into notes of interrogation, Germany without halt or hesitation had moulded her gift of youth into soldiers.

"There had been a moment like a thunderclap while Oswald and Peter had been near the Brandenburg Tor. A swift wave of expectation had swept through the crowd; there had been a galloping of mounted policemen, a hustling of traffic to the side of the road, a hasty lining up of spectators. Then with melodious tootlings and amid gutteral plaudits, a big white automobile carrying a glitter of uniforms had gone by, driven at a headlong pace. 'Der Kaiser!' Just for a moment the magnificence hung in the eye—and passed. What had they seen? Cloaks, helmets, hard visages, one distinctive pallid face, something melodramatic, something eager and in a great hurry, something that went by like the sound of a trumpet, a figure of vast enterprise in shining armor and a mailed fist. This was the symbol upon which these young Germans were being concentrated. This was the ideal that had gripped them. Something very modern and yet romantic, something stupendously resolute. Going whither? At any rate, going magnificently somewhere. That was the power of it. It *was* going somewhere. For good or bad, it was an infinitely more attractive lead than the cowardly and oppressive Czardom that was failing to hold the refractory minds of these young Russians, or the current edition of the British imperial ideal, twanging its banjo and exhorting Peter and his generation to 'tax the foreigner' as a worthy end and aim in life.

"Oswald, with his eye on the dim preoccupied audience about him, recalled a talk that he and Peter had had with a young fellow traveller in the train between Hanover and Berlin. It had been a very typical young German, glasses and all; and his clothes looked twice as hard as Peter's, and he sat up stiffly while Peter slouched on the seat. He evidently wanted to air his English, while Peter had not the remotest desire to air his German, and only betrayed a knowledge of German when it was necessary to explain some English phrase the German didn't quite grasp. . . .

"'Germany may be in too much of a hurry,' he repeated.

"'We came into world politics late,' said the young German, indorsing Oswald's idea from his own point of view. 'We have much to overtake yet. . . .'

"The Germans had come into world politics late. That was very true. They were naive yet. They could still feed their natural egotism on the story of a world mission. The same enthusiasms that had taken Russia to the Pacific—and to grand ducal land speculation in Manchuria—and the English to the exotic slavery of the Rand, was taking these Germans now—whither? Oswald did not ask what route to disillusionment Germany might choose. But he believed that she would come to disillusionment. She was only a little later in phase than her neighbors; that was all. In the end they would see that that white-cloaked heroic figure in the automobile led them to futility as surely as the sidelong Czar. Not that way must the nations go. . . .

"Oswald saw no premonition of a world catastrophe in this German youngster's devotion to an ideal of militant aggression, nor in the whole broad spectacle of straining preparation across which he and Peter travelled that winter from Aix to Wirballen. He was, as it were, magically blind. He could stand on the Hanover platform and mark the largeness of the stations, the broad spreading tracks, the endless sidings the tremendous transport preparations, that could have no significance in the world but military intention, and still have no more to say than that 'These Germans give themselves elbow room on their railways, Peter. I suppose land is cheaper.' He could see nothing of the finger of fate pointing straight out of all this large tidy preparedness at Peter and their fellow passengers and all the youth of the world. He thought imperialistic monarchy was an old dead thing in Russia and in Britain and in Germany alike.

"In Berlin, indeed in every photographer's, was the touched-up visage of the Kaiser, looking heroic, and endless postcards of him and of his sons and the Kaiserin and little imperial grandchildren and the like; they were all as dull and dreary looking as any royalties can be, and it was inconceivable to Oswald that such figures could really rule the imagination of a great people. He did not realize that all the tragedy in the world might lie behind the words of that young German. 'We came into world politics late,' behind the fact that the German imperialist system was just a little less decayed, a little less humorous, a little less indolent and disillusioned than either of its great parallels to the east and west. He did not reflect that no system is harmless until its hands are taken off the levers of power. He could still believe that he lived in an immensely stable world, and that these vast forms of kingdom and empire, with their sham reverences and unmeaning ceremonies and obligations, their flags and militancy and their imaginative senility, threatened nothing beyond the negative evil of uninspired lives running to individual waste. That was the thing that concerned him. He saw no collective fate hanging over all these intent young faces in the Moscow Art Theatre, as over the strutting innocents of patriotic Berlin; he had as yet no intimation of the gigantic disaster that was now so close at hand, that was to torment and shatter the whole youth of the world, that was to harvest the bone and energy of these bright swathes of life. . . ."

Our Own Star-Spangled Banner

A LITTLE woman is a tremendous thing—if she be both pretty and possessed of an ideal—which is certainly the case with Miss Helen Fulton, a young woman still in her twenties, who got tired of being an ingénue in Broadway productions, and who originated and now is boosting a movement to make the words of "The Star-Spangled Banner" known to all Americans.

Miss Fulton, who is chairman of the Mayor's Committee on the National Anthem, spread her campaign yesterday, when at each performance the four hundred motion picture theatres in New York flashed the words of the national anthem on their screens, and when Miss Anna Fitziu sang the song from the steps of the City Hall.

A few weeks ago Miss Fulton, then entirely unknown to the politicians of City Hall Park, called on Henry McDonald, director of the Mayor's Committee on National Defence, and told him that it was a shame that Americans did not know the words of their own national anthem. Mr. McDonald agreed, and was so interested in the young woman's scheme that he had her appointed chairman of the Mayor's National Anthem Committee. Miss Fulton then got the Mayor to proclaim September 14 as National Anthem Day.

The first result of the movement culminated in the motion picture houses and on the steps of the City Hall, and Miss Fulton is now moving on to Washington, where she hopes to extend her idea.

Miss Helen Fulton

—[illegible] Studio

Chairman of the Mayor's Committee on the National Anthem

A film depicting the story of the Star-Spangled Banner is now being prepared and will be released for the opening of the drive. Newspapers published in foreign languages are to aid in the campaign by printing translations of the words with the music, so that those not speaking English may learn the anthem and be able to sing it in their own languages.

Miss Fulton's enthusiasm led her a step further. What Mayor Hylan did applies only to the city. Miss Fulton wrote a letter to Representative Thomas F. Smith, who is secretary of Tammany Hall and the Congressman from the district in which she lives, urging him to introduce in Congress a bill giving national recognition to the anthem, as the army and the navy have given their recognition. Congressman Smith wrote in reply that he believed the purpose might be attained with less delay and less Congressional oratory by executive action. He, therefore, wrote to Secretary Tumulty, setting forth the wishes of Miss Fulton. She has received from Representative Smith a copy of Mr. Tumulty's letter to him on the subject, in which Mr. Tumulty wrote that he had brought the matter to the President's attention.

Milk

APROPOS of the rise during the past year in the price of milk in this country, the following paragraph from "The Milk Reporter" on the situation in Great Britain may be of interest:

"Great Britain is also confronted with a scarcity of dairy products, chiefly the result of shortage in cattle feeds. Permits to buy milk are issued for certain classes of the population, including children under five years, invalids and nursing mothers. Others are on their honor not to buy milk unless it is for these classes.

"The statement is made on excellent authority that 'an adult cannot buy in London a glass of milk, even if willing to pay $20 for it.' Not only butter, but all kinds of fats are obtainable only in extremely small quantities. Some families are without any fats for nearly a week at a time. Ice cream disappeared from the market more than a year ago."